

Meeting Summary
Otay Ranch POM PMT Meeting
County Administration Center, Tower 7
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

Wednesday, June 8, 2011
2:00-4:00 pm

ATTENDEES:

City of Chula Vista

Gary Halbert, Deputy City Manager
Jill Maland, Deputy City Attorney
Marisa Lundstedt, Principal Planner
Glen Laube, Associate Planner

County of San Diego

Sarah Aghassi, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Land Use & Env. Group
Mark Mead, County Counsel
Brian Albright, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
Megan Hamilton, Group Program Manager, DPR
LeAnn Carmichael, Planning Manager, Department of Planning and Land Use
Cheryl Goddard, Land Use Environmental Planner, DPR

Otay Ranch Preserve Steward/Biologist

Mark Doderio, RECON

Public

Michael Beck
Ranie Hunter
Rob Cameron

Agenda Item Numbers noted in parentheses

1. **Call to Order**
(I.) Meeting called to order at 2:05pm by City of Chula Vista/GARY HALBERT
2. **Approval of POM PMT Meeting Minutes of December 2, 2009**
(II.) County of San Diego/SARAH AGHASSI motioned to approve the meeting minutes. Motion seconded by HALBERT. Motion carried.
3. **Public Comment on items not related to Agenda**
(III.) HALBERT opened and closed with no comment.
4. **Status Report**

(IV.A.) County of San Diego/CHERYL GODDARD reported on Preserve conveyance status. POM was managing ~1300 acres, 776 acres within the City of Chula Vista-Salt Creek and 518 within the unincorporated County. Earlier in the year an additional 1500 acres were conveyed into the preserve. The additional lands are located within the unincorporated. A total of 2,860 acres have been conveyed into the Preserve system.

(IV.B.) Recon Environmental/MARK DODERO, as the Otay Ranch Preserve Steward Biologist, provided an update on the management and monitoring of the conveyed properties. RECON was hired by the City and County in Fall 2009. Work completed in Salt Creek and San Ysidro parcels include exotics control, assessment of access-trespass issues, trash removal, establish photo points for detecting long-term changes, general avian point count surveys, focused surveys rare plants, California gnatcatcher and cactus wren and Quino checkerspot Butterfly habitat threats assessment. For the ~1500 acres of newly conveyed lands, baseline surveys were conducted in Spring 2011. Surveys included vegetation mapping, general floral and faunal surveys and reporting.

MICHAEL BECK asked if the preserved lands vs. developed lands is balanced.

GODDARD stated that there is more lands preserved than developed at this time. Otay Ranch Company conveyed lands and is using it as a bank for future development.

City of Chula Vista/MARISA LUNDSTEDT stated that we were out of step for a while for a number of reasons including 1) POM could not accept lands because developers were responsible for completing restoration on the properties being conveyed, 2) There were IODs around the resort site that were not accepted due to replanning/boundary adjustment efforts, and 3) legal and physical access is required before POM can accept lands. The resort site has vacated the IODs and conveyed the 1500 acres elsewhere in the preserve and we have obtained legal and physical access to other conveyance lands.

HALBERT asked with the Preserve Steward Biologist onboard for 18 months, how effective has management been on the ground.

DODERO stated that weed management is an ongoing effort. With new lands coming in, RECON has been focused on access and inventory. Once inventory surveys are completed, can focus on more weed management especially around sensitive species.

(IV.C.) GODDARD provided background regarding future POM alternatives. The Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) implements current POM Structure. JPA and Phase 2. The Resource Management Plan state that the JPA is to be reviewed every 5 years. The PMT and the Policy Committee directed POM staff to explore

future POM alternatives including Jurisdictional POMs and transferring lands to other Public Land Managers.

GODDARD explained that POM staff took the approach of drafting Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the Wildlife Agencies and other Public Land Managers including the Refuge, Fish and Game, BLM and the City of San Diego to provide assurances that management of the preserve lands would be consistent with the MSCP and Otay Ranch EIR requirements. POM staff met with the various agencies to discuss proposed approach and consensus reached on use of MOU format. To date, a MOU has been drafted with the Wildlife Agencies and individual Letters of Understanding (LOU) have been drafted with the public land managers. The MOU and LOUs were provided to the agencies in March for review and comment. BLM and the city of San Diego have not provided comments. POM staff has met with and received verbal comments from the Wildlife Agencies and the Agencies have stated they will provide written comments. A Jurisdictional POM MOU is close to the final draft stage and is currently being reviewed by County Counsel and the City Attorney.

LUNDSTEDT discussed the challenges of alternative POMs. POM staff has spent a lot of time and effort to exploring POM alternatives. The idea to transfer lands to other public agencies east of the lake stemmed from the Baldwin Agreement. Staff has met with the Wildlife Agencies to discuss the intent of the agreement. There has been a change in personnel with Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS) and they have now brought up concerns that have put a stop in the effort. FWS does not believe there is a way to release the County and City from MSCP obligations when transferring lands to other public agencies without having to amend the County and the City's respective approved MSCP documents including the MSCP Implementing Agreements. The MOUs and LOUs have been set up to release the County and City of MSCP obligations once the lands have been transferred. This concern has been brought up approximately 3 months ago. The Wildlife Agencies will bring this issue up to their solicitors and executive management to discuss the issue. As of yesterday, there are no updates. BLM and Fish and Game have stated that they have their own mechanisms to accept lands and would not need the LOUs to do. However, this does not mean that we cannot move forward with land transfers. POM staff's concern is that the County and City continue to spend money on these efforts with changing directions from the Agencies.

LUNDSTEDT presented the Preserve management options including the current POM, current POM and proceed with land transfers east of Otay Lakes, Jurisdictional POM, or continue to pursue Jurisdictional POM and proceed with land transfers east of Otay Lakes.

HALBERT asked if there were any comments from the public.

RANIE HUNTER asked if FWS comments regarding release of County and City MSCP obligations applied to Jurisdictional POMs.

LUNDSTEDT stated that FWS concerns is an umbrella concern covering both Jurisdictional POM and transferring of lands.

BECK stated that there were past discussions to have a non-profit non-governmental entity management the Preserve who could maximize volunteers and that doesn't seem to be on the table anymore. If lands are to be transferred or even with Jurisdictional POMs, there should still be one entity that is science based who can look at the bigger picture and assess priorities and regional efforts. Additionally, looking at the budget, currently almost a third of the budget is being spent on administrative costs and not being spent on the ground.

HALBERT, none of the options, preclude the use of a non-governmental agencies, however there is no guarantee that administrative costs would be any less than existing administrative costs.

BECK stated that management by multiple public agencies may lose the regional bigger picture components and the science based that is needed and would not be lost with one entity managing the entire Preserve.

HALBERT stated that each option presents its own challenge and at this time supports the current POM structure while continuing to pursue Jurisdictional POM and transferring lands east of Otay Lakes. Staff has completed a lot of work and drafted many documents at this point.

AGHASSI supports HALBERTS position. POM staff has drafted many documents to move forward with these options. There will be more clarity once the Wildlife Agencies provide written comments as to whether or not the County and City can move forward with any options other than the current POM structure. Once the written comments are received, the County and City can assess the benefits and liabilities of moving forward with other POM structures.

5. Finance

(V.A.) LUNDSTEDT stated that the FY 11-12 budget totaling \$522,500 was presented at a City Counsel workshop in April and will later be formally presented to City Counsel for approval later in June. This budget is in line with the past 2 fiscal year budgets. There is still front end administration costs to cover work completed on alternative POM structures, assembling the preserves, managing the RECON contract, reviewing RECON work products, and coordinating between the County and City. There is a healthy reserve. It is the City's policy to maintain a preserve at a minimum of 75%.

HUNTER asked if there are any anticipated lands to be conveyed within the next fiscal year.

LUNDSTEDT stated that there may be a few hundred but for the most part it is stagnant at this time.

6. Next POM Meeting

(VI.A.) LUNSTEDT stated that the POM Policy Committee is scheduled for Wednesday June 16th, 2-4pm back in the County Administration Center Tower 7.

7. Adjournment

(X.) HALBERT asked if there were any additional public comments. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 3:17pm.